

For Immediate Release
June 20, 2011

**ISLETA PUEBLO WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY
TO FEDERAL BANK ROBBERY OFFENSE**

ALBUQUERQUE – On June 17, 2011, **Adriana Nicole Abeita**, 24, entered a guilty plea to an information charging her with bank robbery under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office. At sentencing, Ms. Abeita faces a maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised release. Ms. Abeita, an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Isleta, remains on release under pretrial supervision pending her sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Abeita served as the getaway driver for the armed bank robbery of the Bank of the West (Bank) located at 500 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard NE, in Albuquerque on June 22, 2010. Abeita was arrested that same day and charged in a criminal complaint. Ms. Abeita and co-defendant, **James Joshua Abeita**, 31, also an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Isleta, were indicted on armed bank robbery charges on July 13, 2010. Mr. Abeita, who is not related to Ms. Abeita, was arrested on July 28, 2010.

According to the criminal complaint, the Bank was robbed at approximately 10:00 a.m. on June 22, 2010 by a man who verbally demanded money and brandished a 12" kitchen knife at a bank teller. The bank teller provided cash to the robber in response to his demand for "hundreds and fifties" and the money from her "refill" drawer. After leaving the Bank, the robber was seen getting into the passenger side of a dark green Dodge Stratus with a missing front bumper that was driven by a woman. Later that day, several law enforcement agencies received tips from various sources identifying Mr. Abeita as the bank robber and Ms. Abeita as

the driver of the Dodge Stratus. Thereafter, the victim bank teller and another teller identified Mr. Abeita as the bank robber from photo-arrays, and officers of the Pueblo of Isleta Police Department arrested Ms. Abeita. In a post-arrest statement, Ms. Abeita admitted driving the getaway car with knowledge that Mr. Abeita had entered the Bank with the intention of robbing the Bank.

In her plea agreement, Ms. Abeita again admitted being the getaway car driver for Mr. Abeita with the knowledge that he had entered the bank for the purpose of committing bank robbery. Under the terms of the plea agreement, the indictment against Ms. Abeita will be dismissed after she is sentenced.

On June 2, 2011, Mr. Abeita entered a guilty plea to the indictment charging him with armed bank robbery under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office. In entering his plea, Mr. Abeita admitted brandishing a 12" knife at the bank teller when he verbally demanded cash from her on June 22, 2010. Under the terms of his plea agreement, Mr. Abeita will be sentenced to 84-months' imprisonment. Mr. Abeita has been in federal custody since his arrest, and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Albuquerque Police Department and the Pueblo of Isleta Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Roberto D. Ortega.

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